

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

RECEIVED 413

OMB No. 10024-0018 1118

AUG 21 1995

INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions for completing the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Salem Union Church and Cemetery

other names/site number Salem Lutheran Church/Salem United Church of Christ

2. Location

street & number Southeast corner of the junction of SR 1005 (Startown Road) with SR 1274 (Maiden-Salem Road) ☐ N/A ☐ not for publication

city or town Maiden ☒ vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Lincoln code 109 zip code 28092

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jeffrey J. Cross Acting SHPO 16 Aug 95
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

☒ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain:)

for Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Ma J. M. M.

10/4/95

Salem Union Church and Cemetery
Name of Property

Lincoln County, North Carolina
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
☒ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
1		sites
1		structures
	1	objects
3	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

-0-

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility
FUNERARY/cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious facility
FUNERARY/cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late Gothic Revival
MIXED

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick
walls Brick

roof Asphalt
other Wood
Concrete

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☒ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Religion

Ethnic Heritage: European

Period of Significance

ca. 1792-1945

Significant Dates

1849

1914-1915

1936-1937

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

Salem Union Church and Cemetery
Name of Property

Lincoln County, North Carolina
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4.3 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	7
---	---

4	7	5	9	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

3	9	3	3	6	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

3

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

4

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Davyd Foard Hood

organization _____ date 1 April 1995

street & number Isinglass, 6907 Old Shelby Road telephone 704/462-4331

city or town Vale state N.C. zip code 28168

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

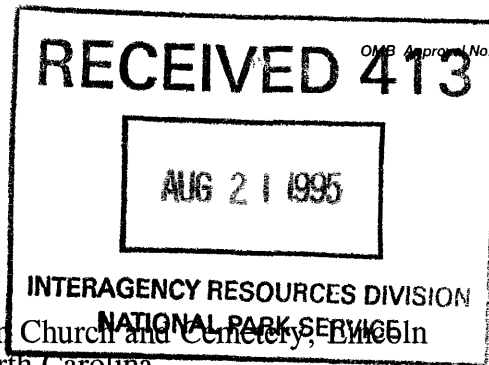
name Mr. Wade Parlier, Vice-Chairman Mr. Neal Chapman, Elder
Salem Lutheran Church Council Consistory of Salem United Church of
3396 Sigmon Dairy Road 2541 Startown Road Christ
street & number telephone
city or town Newton / Lincolnton state N.C. zip code 28658 / 28092

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet



Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 1

Salem Union Church
Narrative Description

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, comprising one contributing building (the church), one contributing site (the cemetery), one contributing structure (the well shed)), and one noncontributing object (the church sign), is a place of religious worship and interment located on a 4.3-acre tract in the southeast corner of the junction of SR 1005 (Startown Road) and SR 1274 (Maiden-Salem Road). As shown on the USGS Reepsville Quadrangle Map, the church and cemetery are located on the east side of the Startown Road, a principal road connecting Lincolnton, the county seat of Lincoln County, with the village of Startown in Catawba County and, via NC 10, with Newton, the seat of Catawba County. The historic roadway, located atop an elevated ridge, carries on a north/south axis and in a generally parallel path with the course of the South Fork of the Catawba River; the river, about two miles to the west of the Startown Road, flows on a north/south axis and is fed by small creeks branching off the west side of the ridge. On the east side of the church the land drops away in a gentle fashion to Clark's Creek which flows into the South Fork near Lincolnton. Thus, Salem Church is situated in the center of a well-watered rural agricultural community: it is located about 0.80 of a mile south of the Lincoln/Catawba County line and to the southwest of the town of Maiden in Catawba County. Historically, its membership has been drawn from a territory which includes both Lincoln County and Catawba County which was formed out of Lincoln County in 1842. The broad, open agricultural landscape in which the church stands, long punctuated by the frame complexes of farm houses, barns, and outbuildings, is increasingly marked by suburban development and its companion brick-veneer houses.

The setting of Salem Union Church and Cemetery is a small 4.3-acre tract that is bounded on the west by the asphalt-paved path of the Startown Road and on the north/northwest by the Maiden-Salem Road. On the south and the east, the church tract shares an unmarked generally open or thinly wooded line with the adjoining tracts: there is a house on the lot to the south while the acreage to the east is agricultural and cultivated. The church and cemetery property is virtually all grass-covered and is marked by a circular asphalt-paved driveway which loops in a gentle fashion and provides access from both public roads. The paving of the driveway melds with an asphalt-paved parking area to the southwest of the church. The principal planting on the property is a row of pin oaks along the edge of the driveway: there are volunteer specimen deciduous trees to the south of the church, in the area of the well shed, and in the thin woodland to the southeast/east of the church. The brick church stands slightly off center on the lot, and the cemetery lies to the north and northeast of the church: the well shed is located to the south of the church, and the church sign, supported by a granite enframement, stands to the west and faces toward the Startown Road. The church property is generally

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 2

well-maintained and the open grass cover comprising the cemetery and lawn of the church is mowed on a regular basis.

Salem Union Church

Built 1849, remodeled 1914-1915, enlarged in 1936-1937 and 1989

Contributing Building

Salem Church is a modest H-shaped brick building comprising two rectangular principal blocks that are connected by a hyphen: both blocks have gable-front elevations which face south. The fabric of the church reflects the vernacular architecture of the area and is modestly conceived and finished: this simplicity of construction reflects, in part, the character of the rural community in which it stands and a functional approach to building which embraces little ornament. The only significant references to architectural style are the lancet-arch door and window surrounds and the southwest corner tower, dating to 1914-1915, which impart a late Gothic Revival flavor to the sanctuary block. The appearance of the church reflects four major periods of construction. The earliest part of the building is the west block of the H-plan: it was erected in 1849 and contains the sanctuary. That simple rectangular building had two doors on the south gable-front facade and three windows on the east and west side elevations. In 1914-1915, that building was remodeled and an offset tower was added on the southwest corner of the church: the flat-headed door and window openings were converted to lancet-arch openings, the former doorways were partially infilled and converted to windows, and a new entrance was installed in the base of the tower. The church stood unaltered for three decades, until 1936-1937, when a two-story hip-roof Sunday School Building was added across the north end of the antebellum sanctuary. At that time, apparently, shallow transepts--creating a cross plan for the sanctuary--were added to the north ends of the side elevations. The appearance of the church remained the same for half a century, until 1989, when a fellowship hall with attendant lavatories, kitchen, and storage rooms was added: this block comprises the east block of the H-plan and the connecting hyphen, offset to the north, dates from that project. (The architectural description of the church will generally follow and reflect that sequence of events.)

The west block of the church's H-shaped plan contains the sanctuary and the Sunday School addition: the gable-front roof of the sanctuary is covered with tin shingles, and the hip roof of the Sunday School addition is covered with asphalt shingles. In effect, the west side elevation of this block, visible from Startown Road, functions as the public "front" of the church, and it is anchored by the tower on the southwest corner. Nevertheless, the formal facade of the church is the south elevation of the antebellum building. It is gable front in form, features flush eaves, and is laid up in one-to-four bond as are all the elevations of the original church: some of the brickwork retains traces

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 3

of its painted joints. The two symmetrically-placed window openings on the south facade have a lancet-arch form and reflect a remodeling and partial infilling of the original flat-arch doorways in these same locations. They hold stained glass windows: the upper part of the opening is enframed by a soldier course enhanced by a projecting header course. Inset in the lower center of the facade is a white marble tablet bearing the following inscription:

SALEM
E. L. & R. CHURCH
1815-1850-1915.

In 1914-1915, a two-stage tower was added to the southwest corner of the church: it contains a vestibule at ground level, a belfry in the upper level, and it is covered with a low hip roof. The entrance, on the south face, contains a pair of five horizontal panel wood doors below a three-part colored glass transom. The west and north faces of the tower contain windows fitted with colored glass. The upper level of the tower is a belfry: each of its faces has a lancet-arch opening fitted with fixed wood louvers. The top of the tower is ornamented with simple well-proportioned corbeled brickwork. The tower replicated like towers on newly-built turn-of-the-century Gothic Revival-style churches and thereby updated the appearance of Salem Church: it also added a much needed vestibule as a transition space between the outdoors and the sanctuary. Now, eighty years after construction, it remains the most visible element in the church's design and serves the very useful purpose of providing a transition from the south front of the church to the west elevation seen by passersby on the Startown Road.

The west elevation of Salem Church has a general two-part division made up of the sanctuary block and the Sunday School addition. The antebellum church had a three-bay west (and east) elevation and two of those window openings, the center and south windows, remain visible to the present. The flat-headed tops of the window openings have been reconfigured to form lancet-arch openings: portions of the original jack arches remain in place at the edge of the later soldier/header course surround. In 1936-1937, when the Sunday School addition was built onto the north end of the sanctuary, the north bay of the original church was cut away and a transept added here to enlarge the seating capacity of the sanctuary and give it a cross-shape plan. This projecting transept, whose west elevation was made flush with the elevation of the Sunday School building, has a pair of lancet-arch window openings in its west face. The openings contain sash windows fitted with colored glass and feature a simple inset soldier-course frame around the top of the opening. (A pendant transept was added to the east elevation of the sanctuary: the two remaining window openings had earlier been reconfigured to lancet-arch form and fitted with stained/colored glass windows. At some point after World War II, a cement

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 4

block closet was built between the east transept and the center window to house the furnace: a brick flue stack rises through its wall.) The two-story west end of the Sunday School addition has a three-bay division on each story: it is laid up in common bond. On the first story, there is a shallow hall which opens to the south into the sanctuary, to the north into the former fellowship hall, and to the east onto a stair to the second-story Sunday School rooms. The six-panel door is flanked by sidelights. it is sheltered by a simple traditionally-style porch added in 1989. The porch has a brick foundation and a cement floor: it is supported by simple columns which rise to the gable front roof. The face of the gable is covered with vinyl siding. The window openings here and throughout the Sunday School addition are rectangular and have no surround except for a simple header course as their sills. The original window sash have been replaced by one-over-one sash in simple frames.

The north rear elevation of the church is also comprised of two principal blocks and here the distinction between the two is more pronounced. The dominant element is the two-story hip-roof mass of the Sunday School addition. It has a symmetrical five-bay division on each story: the east end of the block repeats the three-bay division of the building's west elevation. These window openings now contain one-over-one sash: the easternmost bay on the first story has been partially infilled and fitted with a shorter window. The second principal component of the north elevation of the church is the rear gable end of the 1989 brick-veneer fellowship hall which is laid up in common bond. This back side of the fellowship hall has two windows asymmetrically placed to provide illumination for the kitchen and the ladies lavatory. The low brick hyphen connecting the Sunday School addition with the fellowship hall is blind.

The fellowship hall, as noted, is a rectangular brick-veneer building covered with an asphalt shingle gable-front roof, and connected to the main church block by a low brick hyphen which is blind on both its north and south faces. The east side of the fellowship hall is fitted with two doors positioned near the north end of the building. A conventional six-panel door opens into the fellowship hall while a larger doorway, fitted with paired six-panel doors, opens into a storage room that is located in the northeast corner of the fellowship hall and accessible from both the exterior and the interior of the building. The south elevation of the fellowship hall has a symmetrical three-bay division. Here, small windows, fitted with one-over-one sash, flank a center entrance sheltered by a simple gable-front porch. This porch, like the one added to the west side of the Sunday School addition, has a brick foundation with a cement floor: simple columns rise to the gable-front roof. A pair of six-panel doors open from the porch directly into the fellowship hall. A poured cement sidewalk, incorporating a handicap ramp, carries from the front of the porch westward to the front door of the church and on to the asphalt-paved parking area to the southwest of the church. On the west side of the fellowship hall there are two windows.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 5

The interior of the sanctuary at Salem Church follows a center aisle plan with an elevated, partially recessed, chancel framed by a round arch: like round arches also enframe the broad openings into the east and west transepts at the front of the sanctuary where there are partially-glazed doors opening into halls at the east and west ends of the Sunday School addition. These doors feature figured glass panes above three horizontal panels. The paired doors connecting the vestibule with the sanctuary, in the southwest corner, likewise feature figured glass panes above two horizontal panels. Light passing through the stained and colored glass windows impart a pleasing rich quality to the interior. Within recent decades, a remodeling project has somewhat compromised the character of the sanctuary. The plaster walls of the sanctuary have been covered with inexpensive, manufactured wood grain sheet paneling. The walls of the vestibule were also covered with paneling. At the same time the tongue-and-groove ceiling on the ceiling was concealed by a dropped ceiling of acoustical tiles hung on a metal grid. Nevertheless, the hanging light globes survive in use from the 1910s (or 1930s) renovation as do the pews whose hymn racks hold hymnals of both the Lutheran and United Church of Christ congregations.

As noted, doors open from the sanctuary into small halls positioned at the east and west ends of the Sunday School addition. In both halls, a wide staircase rises to the Sunday School rooms on the second story. Wood handrails rise with the stairs to the second story where a simple railing protects the opening. Doors in the north walls of the halls open into the former fellowship hall and its companion kitchen in the east end of the first story. The fellowship hall has a carpeted floor, walls covered with wood-grain sheet paneling, and an acoustical tile ceiling. The kitchen was refitted, ca. 1986, with new cabinets and other fittings, however, the doorway into the east hall--like the opening from the fellowship hall into the west hall--retains its original partially glazed door.

The original finish of the seven Sunday School rooms on the second story of the Sunday School addition remains remarkably intact and present a simple but well-crafted appearance. The floors are covered with carpet while the plaster walls and ceilings are painted. The door and window surrounds are plain boards with applied backbands. The doors connecting the rooms with the hall each have figured glass panes above three horizontal panels. There are five near equal-sized classrooms on the north side of the hall each with a window overlooking the cemetery. There are small individual rooms at both the east and west ends of the hall.

The first story hall on the east end of the Sunday School addition has a door on its east side which opens into the hyphen communicating with the 1989 fellowship hall. There is a small lavatory here on the north side of the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 6

hyphen. The fellowship hall occupies about three-quarters of the interior space of the east block: it is finished with an ivory colored tile floor, sheet paneling on the walls, and a plaster ceiling which follows the pitch of the gable roof. Individual lavatories for men and women are positioned in the northwest corner of the hall and a large modern kitchen is positioned between the lavatories and the aforementioned storage room in the northeast corner of the building.

Well Shed
ca. 1928
Contributing Structure

In 1928 a well was dug for church use and it appears that the well shed was raised over the well at that time or shortly thereafter. The open-sided well shed is Craftsman style in appearance and consists of four square-in-plan brick piers rising to support a hipped roof with exposed rafter ends. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The shed shelters a cement block pump house. The cement floor of the well house appears to have been poured after the shed was built.

Church Sign
1949
Noncontributing Object

Appealingly functional in shape and design, the church sign consists of a pair of granite uprights supporting an arched-top piece of granite on which is carved "SALEM 1796 1949." The upright piers support a glazed metal signboard. The sign was the gift of Edward Lawrence Carpenter in 1949. The granite came from the well-known quarries at Rockwell, Rowan County, North Carolina.

Church Cemetery
ca. 1792 to the present
Contributing Site

In the eighteenth century the provision of a place for the burial of the Christian dead was considered one of the functions of a church and its congregation: the language of eighteenth and early-nineteenth century deeds conveying land to churches or their trustees frequently cite that role of the church. Although the use of this property for burials was not cited in the deed by which Jacob Killian deeded the original tract here to the trustees it is clear that burials had been occurring here, in conjunction with the use of a building for worship services. A schoolmaster, Antoine Hes, died on Christmas Day, 1792 and was buried here; his surviving gravestone marks the earliest known burial.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 7

The cemetery at Salem Church occupies approximately one-third of the church tract of 4.3 acres. The cemetery lies immediately north of the church and burials extend north and northwest for several hundred feet toward the Maiden-Salem Road. The grass cover of the cemetery merges with the lawn of the church. There is a total of approximately 484 principal markers in the cemetery which mark the graves of individuals, husbands and wives, or family plots. Collectively, these stones represent the stylistic range of monuments from the late eighteenth century to the present. The majority of the nineteenth-century markers are white or variegated marble: in the late nineteenth century granite came into popular use and in the twentieth century granite is the predominant stone used for grave markers. The condition of the pre-twentieth century gravestones is fair to good; however, the surfaces and inscriptions of many of the earliest stones have been worn by exposure over the years and some are unreadable. For the most part, the stones and their inscriptions, dating from the twentieth century are in better condition, in part because of age, and because more of them are of granite and perhaps harder marbles.

Except for the Hes marker, there are few readable stones from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries: one of the earliest identifiable stones is a handsome scroll-top white marble tablet with a raised urn on its face that marks the grave of Elizabeth Moore (ca. 1789-1802). Its high quality suggests that it was imported to the backcountry, perhaps from Charleston, Philadelphia, or New York: there is no visible signature. Similar but more pronounced scrollwork adorns the top of the tablet at the grave of John Wilson (ca. 1753-1831). At the mid-century point, the use of corner, spray fluting marks the tablet markers of Fanny R. Fraiser (1825-1849), Elizabeth Rudisill (ca. 1791-1853), and Ann Wilson (ca. 1766-1855): the Rudisill gravestone also features a star inscribed with a circle at the top of the stone. Two stones from the antebellum period feature the retarditaire use of carved willow trees. Of these, the scroll-top marble tablet at the grave of Julia N. Brown (1820-1843), the wife of the Rev. Abel J. Brown, is the most sophisticated: it was carved and signed by "Boyne & McKenzie, Columbia," South Carolina, and features a willow in the arch-headed center panel with rosettes in the outside corners. The marble tablet stone at the grave of Susannah Killian (1802-1852) has a willow tree carved into a recessed panel at the top center of the stone.

The majority of stones from the antebellum period and post-Civil War years are also tablet forms with either round, peaked, or segmental-arch tops. Among this group is the segmental-arched tablet of Margaret S. Rudisill (1824-1859) carved and signed "Tiddy." The stone marking the grave of Charlie S. Williams (1868-1881) has a more rounded top and was made and signed by Carolina Marble Works of Lincolnton. There are at least two particularly notable rounded-top gravestones which also incorporate the use of Victorian symbolism in the carving of recessed panels. A female hand embracing the hand of a man is

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 8

carved in an oval panel at the top of the marker for John Cansler (d. 1892): it was erected in memory of "Our Dear Father" by Cansler's dutiful daughters "Mattie and Alice." Nearby is the marker for Mary Alice Cansler (1851-1893) which is ornamented with a hand holding the broken chain of life and its forefinger pointing downward: this carving is set in a circular panel.

For the most part flowers and foliate forms are used modestly in the ornamentation of the gravestones in the Salem cemetery; however, two exceptions to this pattern exist. The paired cradle stones of Charles Edward Brown (1857-1859) and his sister Mary Elizabeth Brown (1858-1859), who died within two weeks of each other in September 1859, feature carved rose buds in the typaneums: this shared monument, made and signed "Tiddy," is now missing its rails. Nearly contemporary with the Browns's monument is a handsome white marble obelisk with a bouquet of flowers carved on its face, above the name of Levi M. Killian (1834-1860) which was carved and signed by "Boyne & Sprowl" of Columbia, South Carolina. Another handsome, contemporary stone incorporates foliate and scroll devices to enframe the panel on which the name of Juliann E. Quinn (1837-1862) is inscribed.

The Killian obelisk of 1860 appears to be the first of a series of obelisks marking the graves of prominent members of the Salem Church congregations which continued into the early twentieth century. These classical markers reflect differing forms and degrees of ornamentation, ranging from simple classical shafts to multi-stage compositions with shields, urns, and other appropriate funerary devices. The obelisk marking the grave of Levi M. Killian remained the only one of its type until 1884/1885 when a larger obelisk was raised over the grave of the Rev. A. J. Fox, M.D., who had ministered to the Salem Lutheran congregation for many years. His biography, published in 1885, contains a description of the marker:

A neat monument of Rutland (Vt.) marble stands at the head of his grave. The lower base is beautiful granite, and the upper is marble. From the summit of this rises a round shaft of five feet, of exquisite beauty and polish. The whole monument is ten feet and three inches high.

A low squat obelisk-style marker with a stepped top, made and signed by George E. Coulter of Newton, marks the grave of Mary V. Wilson (d. 1891). The multi-stage obelisk of variegated marble at the grave of John A. Killian (1828-1900) and his wife Carrie A. Killian (1839-1867) is topped by a draped urn. Variegated marble was also used for two obelisk-style markers which appear to be from the same marble yard. The monument at the grave of Ambrose Costner (1825-1911) and his wife Catherine (1827-1903) has a squat shaft with a pointed top. At the grave of Laban S. Killian a similar squat shaft serves as the base of a large sphere which crowns the undated monument.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 7 Page 9

Also dating from the turn of the century are two monuments of related form which mark the graves of men and their wives. The variegated marble monument at the grave of A. Ulysses Alexander (1817-1894) and his wife Rhoda M. (1821-1902) features a pair of short round columns rising from a multi-stage base to support an arch; the arch reflects their married status and, in turn, supports an urn. The like monument at the grave of Henry Killian (1787-1860) and his wife Mary M. Killian (1793-1889) features square piers, instead of columns, rising from a base to support an arch on which is inscribed "Killian": a cross rises from the highest point of the arch on the monument made and signed by "J. H. Brown, RichD, Va."

This last pair of monuments and the obelisks reflect the influence of the Classical Revival at the turn of the century, and classicism continued to influence gravestone design through the opening decades of the twentieth century (and later). The granite monument at the grave of John W. Williams (1838-1915) and his wife C. Ann E. Williams (1846-1930) has a single Ionic pilaster which appears to be emerging from the thick mass of the stone. Collectively this group of stones, marking the comingled graves of members of the church's two congregations, reflect the shared fortunes of these people who have remained bonded in their union church to the present.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 10

Salem Union Church and Cemetery
8. Narrative Statement of Significance

Summary Paragraph

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, comprising a brick church and its adjoining burying ground located in rural Lincoln County about a mile south of the Catawba/Lincoln County line, is a place holding statewide significance in the areas of religion and German ethnic heritage. Situated in an area of the Piedmont settled principally by German-speaking people in the mid eighteenth century, Salem Church has been the site of religious services and interments at least since the 1790s. As was the practice at other early communities, settlers of German background erected a "union Church" here on the east side of the South Fork of the Catawba River. That building was the site of separate services held by the fledgling congregations of the "Dutch" Lutherans and of the "Dutch" Reformed. In 1815, the year in which trustees of the two congregations acquired joint ownership of this property, the original church was replaced by a second building which served the two congregations until a brick church was completed in 1849 and dedicated in 1850. The brick church, remodeled in the Gothic Revival style in 1914-1915, expanded by an educational building in 1936-1937, and further enlarged by the addition of a fellowship hall in 1989, has continued to house the worship services of the descendant Lutheran and Reformed (now United Church of Christ) congregations to the present. Likewise, burials of members of the two congregations has continued in the adjoining cemetery since the late eighteenth century: the monuments marking these graves reflect both the fortunes of the church and the sequence of nationally popular styles seen in traditional funerary art.

In most German settlements in North Carolina, the "union church" was erected as an expedient until the individual congregations gathered the resources to erect their own separate church. In addition to their Protestant religion, the common German language was a second bond between these people and their congregations. In instance after instance, throughout the central Piedmont, these two denominations, joined by necessity in the eighteenth century and prospering in the nineteenth century, erected individual houses of worship on the same, on adjoining, or on nearby tracts of land. Such was the case at Daniels Union Church which stood at the center of a rich agricultural society on the west side of the South Fork of the Catawba River. For reasons that appear to be largely governed by the small size and prosperity of their community, the congregations of Salem Lutheran Church and Salem Reformed Church did not follow that pattern. Instead, they have continued to share their union church and to hold regular services at alternate hours and a joint Sunday School in the single building. The joint ownership of this property and the continued, shared use of this place as the site of public worship by these descendant congregations of German extraction, is the sole surviving instance of a traditional "union church" in North Carolina. Since at least 1968 Salem

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 11

Union Church has been acknowledged as the last surviving union church in North Carolina. Salem Union Church and Cemetery satisfies Criterion A for listing in the National Register of Historic Places for its association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history in the Piedmont and the state. Modest in size and expanded and altered in appearance by a sequence of building projects, Salem Union Church and Cemetery represents the shared German heritage and religious practices of its founding congregations just as those men and women, their offspring, and others have been buried side-by-side in the burying ground to the north of the union church.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 12

Historical Background, Religion, and Ethnic Heritage Context

The great influx of Scotch-Irish and German settlers into the backcountry of North Carolina in the mid eighteenth century comprises an important chapter in the history of colonial and pre-Revolutionary North Carolina. It has been documented in part through books such as Robert W. Ramsey's CAROLINA CRADLE, subtitled "Settlement of the Northwest Carolina Frontier, 1747-1762." A larger explication of the speed with which settlement occurred and communities were established over much of the western Piedmont, including the Catawba River Valley, remains the domain of future historians. The social and cultural institutions which emerged from these settlements include strong churches and church-related bodies: the nurturing of education gave rise to the organization of Davidson College, Catawba College, and Lenoir-Rhyne College; and other schools, colleges, and universities. The Scotch-Irish who came into the Piedmont were almost exclusively Presbyterian in their faith and they quickly established churches which have remained prominent to the present. Thystira and Third Creek churches in Rowan County, Hopewell and Sugaw Creek churches in Mecklenburg County, and Centre in Iredell County are important in this group.

The German settlers were not entirely of one mind: instead they brought with them from Germany and the Palatinate, via Pennsylvania, religious beliefs represented by two denominations. The theology of Martin Luther was represented in the religious congregations which have continued to be known as Lutheran to the present day. Related but different beliefs were espoused by those who organized themselves into a religious body, known as the Reformed Church: it took its name, not from a man, but from the great Reformation which marked the rise of the Protestant Church in Europe. The Reformed Church remained an independent denomination until 1957 when it was merged with the Congregational Church to form the United Church of Christ.

The English-speaking Scotch-Irish settlers quickly built Presbyterian churches at the center of their settlements: the German-speaking settlers from Germany and the Palatinate likewise erected church buildings which became anchors of community development. These early buildings, known as "union churches," were erected jointly by the Lutheran and Reformed congregations which held worship services in the single building on alternate days or at alternate hours. As often as not, these buildings also served as the first public schools in their eighteenth-century community, and the first union church in present-day Lincoln County was first known as the Schoolhouse Church. Now known as Daniel's Church, it stood at the center of the rich agricultural society which developed on the west side of the South Fork of the Catawba River. German settlers on the east side of the South Fork of the Catawba River, in an area which now includes portions of Lincoln and Catawba Counties, subsequently organized Lutheran and Reformed congregations at Salem and began worshipping in a church building here in the later eighteenth century and apparently by 1792 when the first dated interment occurred in the adjoining grounds.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 13

Whether the construction of a "union church," as exemplified here by the construction of Salem Church by its Lutheran and Reformed congregations, was a tradition which the German-speaking settlers of present day Lincoln County and surrounding areas of the Piedmont brought with them from Europe is not known. In retrospect, it appears that the practice of building a single, union church was a practical act of expediency at a time when resources for public buildings were few and language was a common bond. As congregations and their members prospered, they usually determined to build individual churches and the eighteenth century union church, usually a log or simple frame building, gave way to more impressive churches which were usually first of frame and later brick construction. One important early exception to this practice, in the way of materials, were the handsome stone churches erected in Rowan County by Lutheran and Reformed congregations at the end of the eighteenth century. Organ Lutheran Church was completed in 1795 and consecrated at Easter, 1796: Grace Reformed Church, also known as Lower Stone Church, was begun in 1795 but apparently not completed until it was dedicated in 1811. These two churches are the descendant churches of one of the earliest union churches organized by German-speaking settlers in the mid-eighteenth century in North Carolina.

Although the "union church" appears to have survived longer in Lincoln County as a religious and cultural institution than it did elsewhere in the Piedmont, its survival at Salem Church to the present is a remarkable instance. In the county seat, at Lincolnton, the ca. 1787 union church came to be known as the Old White Church after it was painted and served as the nursery for the major Protestant denominations organized in the town. Lincolnton's Lutheran and Reformed congregations, which both saw periods of growth and decline in the nineteenth century, worshipped in the building until it was destroyed by fire on 23 December 1893. In western Lincoln County, the Lutheran and Reformed congregations continued to hold services in the Schoolhouse Church until 1844 when they jointly erected a new frame union church. Prior to this, in 1833 the congregations had renamed themselves Daniel's Church, in honor of John Daniel Warlick: Daniel's Union Church housed its Lutheran and Reformed congregations until 1888 when the Lutherans, perhaps both more numerous and prosperous, decided to erect their own church which they completed and occupied in 1889. The Reformed congregation remained in the antebellum frame church until their new building was completed in 1895. (For further information on the history of the union church in Lincolnton and Lincoln County see the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form "Historically and Architecturally Significant Churches and Church-Related Cemeteries in Lincolnton, North Carolina.")

The construction of a union church at the place now marked by Salem Church in the later years of the eighteenth century appears to be part of the usual process in which a strong "mother church" spawns new churches at the edges of its parish as increases occur in area population and church memberships. Salem

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 14

Church, on the east side of the South Fork of the Catawba River, antedates the organization of a second union church at the edge of the Schoolhouse Church territory by but a few years: Grace Union Church, dating to about 1796, was organized on the west side of the South Fork several miles to the north of the Schoolhouse Church and land for the building was acquired in 1797. It is unclear at present just when Salem Church was organized or services were first held at this place. Presumably, this site was in use as a place of worship by 1792 when a schoolmaster by the name of Antoine Hes died on Christmas Day and was buried here. His simple gravestone, inscribed in German and bearing the date 1792, survives in the cemetery. The traditional date for the organization of the church, held by the two congregations to the present, is 1796. That date was acknowledged at the centennial celebration in 1896, and it was restated in a historical sketch of the church prepared by the Rev. Dr. Luther Lindsay Lohr and published in the NORTH CAROLINA LUTHERAN in April 1936. It seems probable that most of the earliest interments were marked by fieldstones (until conventional monuments were erected at these graves). The names and dates of deaths of those persons first interred in the cemetery have eroded or otherwise been lost from most of a small early group of simple tablet markers whose inscriptions are almost totally illegible. Likewise, the use of German decorative devices on the early gravestones has also been largely lost except for the nineteenth century use of fan and circular devices which have some association with German-speaking peoples.

The earliest known extant records of Salem Church begin in the mid 1810s when the two congregations set about to build a new church. A copy of a subscription list dated 29 August 1814 survives and defines efforts by the church undertaken that day. Its purpose was

. . . to repair the old meeting house known by the name of Salem, so as to render it commodious for the place of Divine Worship--to be free to all Christian denominations whatever, who may be properly authorized by and in good fellowship with the religious society to which he may belong, who may from time to time appoint to preach in said house. . . .¹

The names of nineteen subscribers and the amount of their pledges appear as do the names of the three commissioners who were to oversee the work: they are Col. John Reinhardt, Capt. Henry Ramsour, and Mr. Joshua Wilson. Work on that building commenced in 1816 and it was largely completed in 1821. The finish of the building included both white and Spanish brown paint.

The construction of the new church in the 1810s was also the occasion for the conveyance of the church site to trustees of the two congregations: apparently the site of the first house of worship at Salem was on private land. On 19 July 1815 Jacob Killian deeded a tract comprising two acres and thirty-two poles to "John Reinhardt, Henry Ramsour, & Joshua Wilson Commissioners (now appointed for the Meeting house Salem)" for the purpose of "encouraging schools and a place for public worship."² From further language in the deed, it

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 15

appears that the existing meeting house and a schoolhouse as well as the cemetery were located on the two-acre-plus tract. The building completed in 1821 housed the worship services of the two congregations for about thirty years, until the brick church was erected in 1849. During this period both congregations were ministered to by preachers who also held services at Daniels, Grace, St. Matthew's, and other churches in Lincoln County and the adjoining area.

Even though there was not a resident minister for either Lutheran or Reformed members, the church grew and prospered during the first half of the nineteenth century under lay leadership. This community prosperity is also seen in the design and appearance of the handsome white marble gravestones which date from the first decade of the 1800s into the 1840s. This growth was sufficient that on 26 September 1835 members of Salem Church considered a proposal for expanding the church.

There was a meeting of the citizens at Salem Meeting house, to transact business relative to Said Church at which there was a proposition made to build an addition to said house for the accomodation of people of colour, on days of publick worship. After duly considering the above proposition Resolved that we would build sd. addition. And a committee of five was appointed to form & plan for said building--and its probable cost--The committee reported as follows. The addition to be put to the pulpit end of the meeting house. Thirteen feet wide, with a Shed Roof, one Story 8ft. high & to have four 12 light windows. One outside door, & from the body of the house into the addition to be finished off in a plain manner. & that three logs behind the pulpit are to be cut out as far as the opening of the gallery.³

On 15 April 1848 the first meeting was held which led to the construction of the brick church: subsequently expanded, it continues to shelter services of holy worship at this place. Although some discussion was given to the possibility of repairing the existing building, it appears that the decision to build anew here was easily made by the members under the guidance of chairman Jacob Killian. Killian appointed a committee of five men who were charged with the responsibility "to draft a plan of a house--the principles upon which it is to be built, and open subscription lists for the purpose of raising a fund for building purposes."⁴ The members of the building committee were: William McCasland, Jacob Ramsour (mill wright), David Heedick, John Coulter, and John Heedick. The committee was charged with preparing a plan for the building and to report on it at a meeting at the church on the Saturday before the third Sunday of May 1848.

The committee met on 29 April 1848 and determined the size and features of the new church.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 16

Resolved that we will build a Union Church, to belong and be the property of the Lutherans and the German Reformed Denominations of Christians.

Resolved that the Size of the house be 35 feet by 45 and that the Story be 13 feet high in the clear two doors and eight windows 18 lights; to be not less than 10 by 12 inches and covered with good heart pine shingles.⁵

The minutes of that meeting do not specify whether the building was to be of frame construction or brick; however, at the congregational meeting held on Saturday, 20 May 1848, the decision, was made to build a brick church. Several other decisions were made concerning the building and the means of its construction at the meeting on 20 May 1848: among them was the appointment of Jacob Ramsour (mill wright), William McCasland, and David Heedick as commissioners to receive monies, to make contracts, and to superintend the construction of the church. This committee advanced the cause of the new project over the summer of 1848 and at a congregational meeting on 16 September 1848, they reported that a total of \$451.00 had been subscribed toward the erection of a new brick church. A motion was introduced and passed to defer construction of the church until spring of 1849: another adopted motion specified that materials were to be delivered to the site by the first day of March 1849. The final motion, recorded in the minutes, specified "that the house be set about forty feet north of the Old building and that it be set North and South, with doors in the South end of the building."⁶

The brick church erected by the Salem congregation in 1849 and dedicated in 1850 was the second known brick church erected in Lincoln County outside the town of Lincolnton where the town's Presbyterian congregation had erected a brick church in 1838-1839. In 1848, while members of Salem Church were considering their new church, they were probably cognizant of the fact that a brick church was being completed in eastern Lincoln County for Machpelah Presbyterian Church. That building has survived, apparently little altered, to the present and features two doors on its gable front elevation and three openings on each side elevation which hold nine-over-nine sash windows. A comparison of the specifications for Salem Church and its fabric with that of Machpelah Church indicate a remarkable similarity between the two nearly contemporary antebellum churches. A documentary photograph of Salem Union Church, made around the turn of the century, shows it to have been a small brick church with two doors on the south gable-front facade and three windows on the (west) side elevation: double leaf three-panel blinds cover the window openings. Except for the flat arches across the window and door openings, the only ornament is a scroll-sawn bargeboard which carries along the eaves. Machpelah and Salem churches survive to the present as the only pre-Civil War religious buildings in Lincoln County.

According to historical sketches of the two churches which appear, respectively, in the HISTORY OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN NORTH CAROLINA (1953)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSalem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North CarolinaSection number 8 Page 17

and A STORY OF THE SOUTHERN SYNOD OF THE EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH (1968), services at Salem Church were held by ministers who had responsibility for preaching at several churches in the area or by supply ministers until the arrival of the Rev. Alfred J. Fox (1817-1884). Fox proved to be a strong leader for the Salem Lutheran congregation. Rev. Fox, the son of Daniel (d. 1880) and Elizabeth Moretz Fox (d. 1853) and a native of Chatham County, was ordained a minister of the Lutheran Church at Salem Church on 13 September 1838 during a meeting of the Tennessee Synod of the Lutheran Church. In 1854, Fox received a call to return to the Lincoln/Catawba County area and to become minister of Grace Church in Catawba County, Daniel's and Trinity churches in Lincoln County, and Christ's Church in Gaston County. Fox preached his first sermon at Grace Church on 7 January 1855, and shortly thereafter relocated to a farm near Salem Church. At the end of 1855, he resigned from Christ's Church and accepted a call from Salem Church. His biography, published in 1885, indicates that Andrew J. Fox remained minister of Grace and Salem Lutheran churches until his death on 10 June 1884. His funeral was preached at Salem Church and his body is buried in the cemetery: his grave is marked by an obelisk of white Vermont marble.⁷ During Fox's long tenure as pastor of Salem Lutheran Church the fortunes of that denomination prospered. On 11 March 1877, Salem Lutheran Church voted to have preaching on two Sundays per month: this practice would remain in effect for nearly a century, until 1973. The Rev. R. A. Yoder succeeded Fox as pastor of the Lutheran congregations at Grace and Salem churches and remained as their minister until 1899. Less is known about the services held by the Reformed members of Salem Church: numerically, it was never as large as the Lutheran congregation and it was not formally organized until 1874. Apparently there were irregular services held by supply ministers until the arrival of the Rev. Joseph L. Murphy as Reformed pastor in 1885; Murphy divided his time between Daniel's Church and Salem Church until 1890. The increasing stability of the two congregations had a like parallel in the financial prosperity of the church members: the graves of deceased members were marked by monuments whose size and carving became larger and more elaborate, respectively, as the century neared its end.

Apparently both congregations of Salem Church saw some increase in their fortunes in the decades at the turn of the century and they celebrated the centennial of Salem Church in 1896. Both churches remained a part of a charge and shared their ministers with other area Lutheran and Reformed congregations. According to the sketches in the aforementioned denominational histories, the property holding of Salem Church was increased in 1863 by the purchase of a small tract from Henry Killian: this transaction, said to have been for the purpose of enlarging the cemetery, has not been confirmed and documented. On 22 October 1903, A. M. Lutz and his wife deeded a small tract 148 poles to Ambrose Costner, H. F. McCaslin, and Charley Ramsour, trustees of Salem Church.⁸ At a congregational meeting on 4 August 1914, members of Salem Church decided upon certain improvements to the church which marked the first significant alteration in the fabric of the antebellum building. Generally

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 18

speaking, the church was remodeled in the Gothic Revival style. The doors on the south gable end of the church were partially infilled with brick and converted to windows: those flat-headed openings and those on the side elevations were altered to lancet-arch form and fitted with stained or colored glass. In the style of the time, a tower was erected at the southwest corner of the church: the first story became a vestibule while the upper level of the tower became the belfry. Inside, the ceiling and floor were replaced and new pews and chancel furnishings were acquired.

In anticipation of this work, a formal agreement concerning ownership and responsibility for the building was drawn up, and the church property, consisting of the original 1815 tract and the 1903 Lutz tract was conveyed to trustees of the two congregations. On 19 September 1914, H. F. McCaslin, Frank Bost, and Charles E. Ramseur, trustees of Salem Meeting House, conveyed undivided interests in the property to trustees of the respective Lutheran and Reformed congregations. A three-fourths interest in the church property was deeded by the trustees of the union church to Abel Seagle, Lee Hoover, and Henry F. McCaslin, trustees of the Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church: a one-fourth undivided interest was conveyed to Jacob Ramsour, T. L. Finger, and J. S. Warlick, trustees of Salem Reformed Church.⁹ The above-cited work on the church was completed during the following nine months. On 29 May 1915 a white marble plaque was placed in the center of the south facade: it is inscribed "SALEM E. L. & R. CHURCH, 1815-1850-1915." On Sunday, 30 May 1915, the newly-refurbished sanctuary was dedicated by the Rev. F. M. Speagle, pastor of Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church: Dr. Luther Lindsay Lohr made the dedicatory address. In the afternoon, Dr. Charles W. Warlick, supply pastor of Salem Reformed Church, preached at a second service.

The renovation of 1914-1915 reflected growth in the congregations of Salem Church and it appears to have encouraged promise in the affairs of the church in the decades of the 1910s, the 1920s, and the 1930s. After the departure of the Rev. Dr. Charles W. Warlick from the pulpit of the Salem Reformed Church in 1917, the congregation was ministered to by two short-term pastorates until the arrival of the Rev. John A. Koons in 1919: he would remain minister to the Salem Reformed congregation until 1944, and his pastorate would reflect the longest period of stability in the Reformed church at Salem. In 1917, the Rev. F. M. Speagle also resigned as minister of Salem Lutheran Church. He was succeeded by two ministers during the period of 1918-1926: in 1927 the Rev. Jeff L. Norris came as minister of Salem Lutheran Church and remained in the pulpit until 1937. In 1928 a well was dug at the church and subsequently it was covered with the hipped roof well shed.

During the early-mid 1930s, while Koons was pastor of the Reformed church and Norris was pastor of the Lutheran church, the two congregations considered the construction of a Sunday School building. On 15 July 1935, Mr. Koons and Mr. Norris, together with members of both congregations met with an architect

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 19

to discuss the design for the new building: the identity of the architect who furnished a plan for the Sunday School addition is unknown. His plan for the two-story addition was subsequently approved and a building committee of six men appointed to oversee construction of the facility. Garrett Chandler, J. P. Finger, and Iron Hull represented the Lutheran congregation while Raymond G. Ramsour, Odis C. Carpenter, and Jacob Ramsour represented the Reformed component of the church: Odis C. Carpenter became chairman of the committee and Garrett Chandler served as secretary. James McCaslin, a Lutheran, furnished the lumber for the building and members of the church and the community are credited with much of the work on the building. The building was begun in the summer of 1936 and first used for classes on 19 September 1937. The Sunday School building was dedicated on Sunday, 2 October 1938: the Rev. Dr. Jacob L. Morgan, president of the North Carolina Lutheran Synod, spoke at the morning service, and Dr. Howard R. Omwake, president of Catawba College, gave the address at the afternoon Dedicatory service.¹⁰

During the half century from the dedication of the Sunday School building in 1938 until the construction of the fellowship hall in 1989, there was little change in the physical fabric of the church facility. In 1949 Edward Lawrence Carpenter donated the granite enframement erected to hold the church sign. During this period, the two congregations continued to hold services at Salem Church: over the course of these years the membership of the Reformed congregation held its own or declined while the membership of the Lutheran Church increased. On 15 November 1959, Salem Lutheran Church joined with St. Luke's Church to form a two-church parish, and in 1960-1961 the two churches erected a parsonage. In 1969 the Salem Lutheran Church became wholly self-sufficient and discontinued receiving support from the Synod. In the 1970s, the Lutheran congregation made two forward steps, both of which reflected the rising fortunes of the church. Beginning with the morning service on the first Sunday in December 1973, Salem Lutheran Church began holding weekly morning worship: for nearly a century, since March 1877, the church had held morning services with preaching only twice a month.

On 1 May 1976, Salem Lutheran Church became a self-sufficient single congregation with its own minister for the first time in its history: the Rev. M. Jack Rhyne, minister to Salem and St. Luke's churches since 1967, accepted the call to become the church's first resident pastor and he has remained at Salem Church to the present. During this same period, membership in the Salem Reformed Church declined just as its identity was subsumed in the merger with the Congregational Church to form the United Church of Christ in 1957. The church remained on a charge and has never been able to support its own minister. Nevertheless, rather than merge with another area congregation, its members have remained loyal and held together while its sister Reformed (United Church of Christ) congregations at Grace and Daniels churches have ceased to exist. Generally speaking, the Reformed (United Church of Christ) denomination has declined in the Piedmont except in certain strong churches

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 20

including Grace Church, Newton, and Corinth Church in Hickory, both in neighboring Catawba County.

In 1989, the combined congregations of Salem Union Church decided to enlarge their church plant and determined to erect a brick-veneer fellowship hall with adjoining kitchen, lavatories, and storage. The building, adjoining the antebellum church on the east, was completed by contractor/builder Larry Hoyle and his workmen. Now, as has been the practice for many years, the congregation of Salem United Church of Christ holds services on the second and fourth Sundays at nine o'clock, while the congregation of Salem Lutheran Church gathers each Sunday here at eleven o'clock: members of both churches gather together each Sunday for Sunday School at ten o'clock. Expenses and upkeep continue to be shared on the respective three-quarters (Lutheran) and one-quarter (United Church of Christ) basis.

As Salem Union Church approaches its bicentennial, the character of the church and its community remains much as it has for generations. In 1936, the Rev. Luther Lindsay Lohr prepared a historical sketch of Salem Church which was published in THE NORTH CAROLINA LUTHERAN in April of that year. The final paragraph of his essay, penned sixty years ago, remains appropriate as a summation of the church and its place.

Salem throughout all its history has been made up of a very substantial class of people. No other country congregation has a finer lot of monuments erected to the memory of its dead. These monuments tell at a glance of the high standing of those who are buried there. It never has been and never will be a strong congregation numerically. Its territory is too limited to expect that. Twenty-five years ago some of the less optimistic felt that its days were practically numbered. Many rural congregations have this feeling when contemplating the matter of loss and gain. Salem has lost by death, by removal of many of its best families, and by financial reverses, some of its strongest supporters. It is still a union church, one of the few in the synod; but the two congregations live together harmoniously as they should. The congregation is still bringing forth fruit in old age.¹¹

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 21

ENDNOTES

1. "Minute Book of Salem Church," typescript copy, p. 1. A photocopy of the typescript copy of the minute book is located in the vertical files in the history room of the Lincoln County Public Library, Lincolnton, North Carolina. The book has entries which cover the period from 1814 to 1896 and they appear to concern mainly building and rehabilitation projects undertaken by the church during that period. The "Minute Book" is a principal source for the nineteenth-century history of the church. This citation from the "Minute Book" was also published in: Banks J. Peeler, A STORY OF THE SOUTHERN SYNOD OF THE EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH (N. p.: Southern Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, 1968), p. 363. A historical sketch of Salem Reformed Church appears on pages 362 through 366.
2. Jacob Killian to John Reinhardt, Henry Ramsour, and Joshua Wilson, 19 July 1815, Book 27, pp. 76-77, Lincoln County Deeds, Office of the Register of Deeds, Lincoln County Court House, Lincolnton, North Carolina. Hereinafter deeds will be cited as Lincoln County Deeds.
3. "Minute Book of Salem Church," typescript copy, p. 15.
4. Ibid, p. 18.
5. Ibid, p. 19.
6. Ibid, p. 21.
7. Junius B. Fox, BIOGRAPHY OF REV. ALFRED J. FOX, M. D. (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1885), scattered pages.
8. A. M. Lutz and wife to Ambrose Costner, H. F. McCaslin, and Charley Ramsour, trustees of Salem Church, 22 October 1903, Book 82, p. 495, Lincoln County Deeds. With the deed of the Costner property in 1903, the church acreage increased to just over four acres and approached its present size of 4.3 acres. In 1931, a tract of about one-eighth acre was acquired from B. L. Summerow, and in 1966 a tract of about one-tenth acre was deeded to the church by C. C. Biggerstaff. These final two acquisitions evened out the church boundaries and complete the present holding included in this nomination.
9. H. F. McCaslin, Frank Bost, and Charles E. Ramsaur to Abel Seagle, Lee Hoover, and Henry F. McCaslin, trustees of Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church, and to Jacob Ramsaur, T L. Finger, and J. S. Warlick, trustees of Salem Reformed Church, 19 September 1914, Book 113, pp. 378-380, Lincoln County Deeds.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 8 Page 22

10. "Dedication of Sunday School Building of the Salem Evangelical Lutheran and Salem Evangelical and Reformed Congregations." A photocopy of the four-page program, which included a two-page "Historical Sketch" outlining the history of the church and the 1936-1937 building project, was made available to the author.
11. L. L. Lohr, "Salem," THE NORTH CAROLINA LUTHERAN 14 (April 1936): 7.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 9 Page 23

9. Bibliography

Bost, Raymond M., and Norris, Jeff L. ALL ONE BODY: THE STORY OF THE NORTH CAROLINA LUTHERAN SYNOD, 1803-1993. Charlotte: Delmar Printing Company, 1994.

"Dedication of Sunday School Building of the Salem Evangelical Lutheran and Salem Evangelical and Reformed Congregations," 1938. A photocopy of the printed program for the dedication services was made available to the author.

Fox, Junius B. BIOGRAPHY OF REV. ALFRED J. FOX, M. D. Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1885.

"Historical Sketch of Salem Church," prepared by the Historical Committee, Salem Church, 1986. A photocopy was made available to the author.

Historically and Architecturally Significant Churches and Church-Related Cemeteries in Lincolnton, North Carolina, National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form prepared by Davyd Foard Hood in 1993.

Lincoln County Deeds, Office of the Register of Deeds, Lincoln County Court House, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

"Minute Book of Salem Church." A photocopy of this book is available in the vertical files in the history room of the Lincoln County Public Library, Lincolnton, North Carolina.

Morgan, Jacob L., Brown, Bachman S. Jr., and Hall, John, eds. HISTORY OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN NORTH CAROLINA. N. p.: United Evangelical Lutheran Synod of North Carolina, 1953.

Nixon, Alfred. HISTORY OF DANIEL'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN AND REFORMED CHURCHES. Hickory, North Carolina: A. L. Crouse & Son, Book & Job Printers, 1898.

Peeler, Banks J. A STORY OF THE SOUTHERN SYNOD OF THE EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH. N. p.: Southern Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, 1968.

Sherill, William L. ANNALS OF LINCOLN COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA. Charlotte: Observer Printing House, 1937.

THE NORTH CAROLINA LUTHERAN, April 1936.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number 9 Page 24

10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property comprises parcel number 362600623057 in the Lincoln County Tax Map System.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The nominated property comprises those parcels of contiguous land which have been acquired by the trustees of the church for use by the church for religious purposes and for the church cemetery during its period of significance.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Additional Documentation

Salem Union Church and Cemetery, Lincoln
County, North Carolina

Section number _____ Page 25

Additional Documentation

Photographs

Salem Union Church and Cemetery: Schedule of Photographs

The following information applies to all of the photographs included in this nomination.

Name of Property: Salem Union Church and Cemetery
Southeast corner of junction of SR 1005 (Startown
Road) with SR 1274 (Maiden-Salem Road)
Maiden Vicinity
Lincoln County
North Carolina

Photographer: Davyd Foard Hood

Date of Photographs: 21 February 1995

Location of Original Negatives: North Carolina Division of Archives and
History
109 East Jones Street
Raleigh, NC 27601-2807

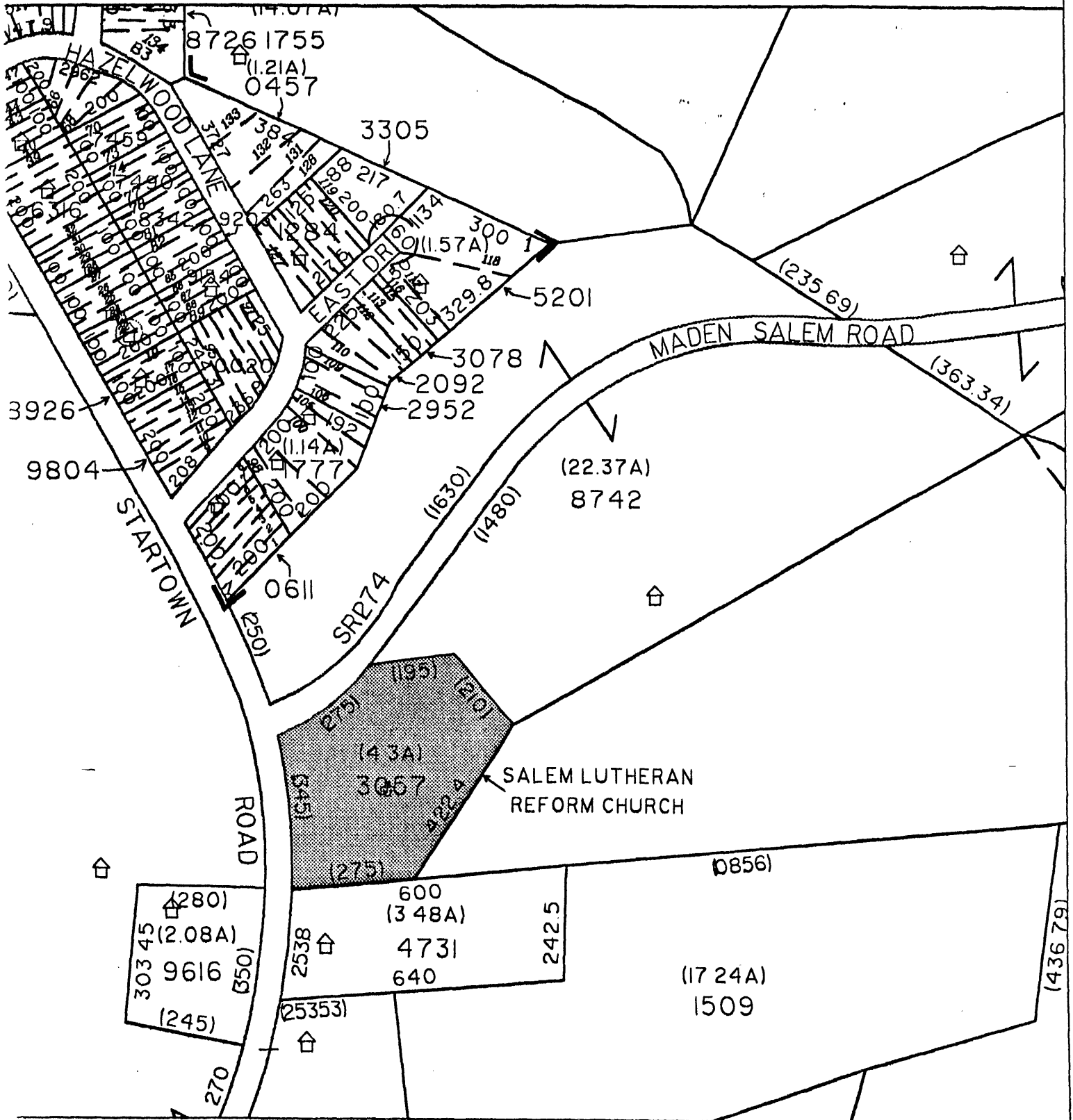
1. Salem Union Church: Overall view, looking northeast.
2. Salem Union Church: Sanctuary interior, looking north.
3. Salem Union Church: Window detail on the west, side elevation,
looking east.
4. Salem Union Church: Cemetery view, looking east/southeast.
5. Salem Union Church: Gravestone of Elizabeth Moore (died 1802), looking
east.
6. Salem Union Church: Gravestones of Antoine Hes (died 1792), looking east.

OFFICE OF THE TAX ADMINISTRATOR

LINCOLN COUNTY AND ITS MAPPING CONTRACTORS ASSUME NO LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR

BASED ON THE NORTH CAROLINA STATE PLANE COORDINATE SYSTEM 1983 NAD
SHADED PIN#: 362600623057 and PID#: 837 PLOT FROM MAP(S) 3626

SCALE: 1" = 300' DATE: 15 Mar 95 16:07:53 Wednesday Prepared for: DAVYD FOARD HOOD



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 95001118

Date Listed: 10/4/95


Salem Union Church and Cemetery
Property Name

Lincoln **NORTH CAROLINA**
County **State**

N/A

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

10/5/95
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Section No. 5

This nomination is amended to show that the property is classified as a building, rather than as a district, since the predominant resource is the church.

This change was confirmed by phone with the North Carolina SHPO (10/5/95).

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)